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2nd-Ranking Embassy Marine A Suspect in Security Breach

Secret Contacts With Soviet Women Alleged

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The second-ranking member of the Marine Corps security guard unit at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow has been identified as a third suspect in the widening investigation of security breaches at American embassies overseas, government officials said yesterday.

Pentagon officials said Staff Sgt. Robert Stanley Stufflebeam, 24, of Bloomington, Ill., the assistant commander of the Marine security guard unit in Moscow, "is suspected of having associations with Soviet women on several occasions" and also of failing to report those contacts.

Stufflebeam, who also is suspected of making false declarations upon leaving Moscow by stating that no such contacts had occurred, is not suspected of espionage at this time, according to Pentagon spokesman Robert B. Sims.

Stufflebeam was a supervisor for two other Marine guards at the embassy who have been charged with espionage and other violations for allegedly allowing Soviet KGB agents access to sensitive embassy areas, Sims said. Both Marines also allegedly were sexually involved with Soviet women who worked at the embassy.

The implication of a third Marine guard in the Moscow investigation expanded what some officials call one of the worst security breaches uncovered at a U.S. embassy.

U.S. officials said yesterday that the investigation has been extended to Marine guards at some other embassies and the interrogation of all Marines who served in Moscow at the time of the incident. They said the Naval Investigative Service is also examining anew all past cases involving Marines and military personnel who were disciplined for fraternizing with foreign women.

Administration sources said yesterday that the cost of repairing damage to U.S. communications and security operations at the Moscow embassy could reach $20 million to $25 million, requiring a supplemental appropriation from Congress.

In an interview yesterday, Robert E. Lamb, head of the State Department's embassy security office, said there had been "a pattern of very skillful attempts by the Soviets to penetrate our security, not only the Marines and not only in Moscow but in a number of places around the world."

Lamb said he had read reports of fraternization between Marines and foreign women that appeared to be "the beginnings of a hostile intelligence probe. But I don't want to say the Marines are the only ones."

Pentagon officials said yesterday that formal charges have been filed against the second of Stufflebeam's subordinates, Cpl. Arnold Bracy, 21, of Queens, N.Y. The charges are similar to those filed earlier against Sgt. Clayton J. Lonetree, 25, of St. Paul, Minn., and include espionage and failure to report possible espionage acts of colleagues to his commanders.

Bracy is accused of conspiring with Lonetree and acting as a lookout, "monitoring, silencing and securing various alarms" while Lonetree allowed unauthorized Russians to roam sensitive embassy areas, according to military documents.

U.S. officials confirmed that Bracy was demoted, fined, expelled from the Marine guard embassy program and sent home last August after he was caught having sex with a Soviet woman who served as an embassy cook in the home of a diplomat. At the time, he was not suspected of espionage activity, the officials said.

Bracy is also accused of failing to report telephone conversations and personal contacts with the cook and a Russian named Alexei G. Yefimov, who used the name "Uncle Sasha."

Stufflebeam, who was assigned to the 1st Marine Division at Camp Pendleton, Calif., after serving at the Moscow embassy from May 1985 until May 1986, is confined to the brig at the camp, Pentagon officials said.

In statements to investigators in December, Lonetree described how his relationship with Soviet translator Violetta Alexdrovna Sauna grew from what he described as a chance meeting in a Moscow subway station into a series of clandestine rendezvous at her home and later at an immaculately clean house ostensibly owned by her "Uncle Sasha." Lonetree and the translator often would meet at a subway station and then slip off to her home, the locale of their four sexual trysts, he said.

In January, the same month that Lonetree said "our relationship took on a sexual meaning," Sauna introduced him to Sasha, identified in court papers as Yefimov, at another meeting that began in a subway station there. Later, as the relationship developed, Lonetree said he gave Sasha, whom he believed to be a KGB agent, a code name, "Mr. Laurel from Finland." Sasha used the name to telephone Lonetree when he was reassigned to the Vienna embassy.

Meanwhile, the State Department announced that the U.S. ambassador to Thailand, William A. Brown, is being brought home temporarily to help with the Moscow embassy investigation and the wide-ranging review under way of overseas security procedures.

An additional issue being examined is the role of the embassy regional security officer, who has direct operational responsibility for the Marine security detail. Lamb said he had looked into the performance of the Moscow embassy security officer, Frederick A. Mecke, during the time Lonetree and Bracy were serving there and that he was "satisfied with the way he responded."

He said Mecke had added one Marine to the night security watch and had "greatly improved" the overall security program there. But the changes came after Lonetree left Moscow in March 1986.

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Lonetree may have implicated others in the Moscow detachment of failing to report knowledge of his affair with the translator, Sauna, who was described by his lawyer as a "stunning blonde." In a statement the Marine gave Naval Investigative Service agents in Vienna in December, Lonetree said he had told two other Marines in the detachment of "my relationship with Violetta" and had told a third he "had friends in town."

Staff writer Bill McAllister contributed to this report.

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